

Whittlesey Ceramic Types

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The Whittlesey Focus of northeastern Ohio has received scant attention since the original work of Greenman (1937) and Morgan and Ellis (1943) during the 1920's and 1930's. The only significant recent contribution has been a brief paper by Fitting (1964), an analysis of extant Whittlesey ceramic collections.

Excavations at the Fairport Harbor, Lyman (Indian Point), Reeve, and South Park sites were conducted during 1967 and 1968 for the Natural Science Museum, Cleveland. During preliminary analysis of the ceramics it was found that nearly all of the rim sherds could be assigned to one of seven types. Four of these types, informally described by Fitting (1964), will be redefined in this paper, and two new types will be described. All such definitions of formal ceramic types are inevitably subjective and are always subject to future refinement. The same is true of inferred relationships and suggested ages of these types.

Reeve Horizontal (Fig. 1, Row 1, left; Fig. 2, Row 4, right)

Description: Nearly straight to slightly everted rims. Cordmarked or smoothed-over cordmarking decorated with five to eight horizontal incised lines of moderate (1/8 to 1/4 inch) width; narrow line incising does not occur. Lips are flat or convex and usually incised or notched. A border of punctates may occur either above or below the horizontal incising; it is below the incising on 30% of the sherds from Fairport Harbor.

Temper: Predominately grit. Only 4.1% of the Reeve Horizontal sherds from the Reeve site have shell temper. At Fairport Harbor, 32.2% of the sherds of this type contain shell; at Lyman, 65%.

Remarks: Fitting (1964: 164) included rims with horizontal incising and a notched, added rim strip in Reeve Horizontal. Such sherds are here placed in the Reeve Filleted category.

Occurrence: Most abundant at the Reeve site (58.6%). The type constitutes 26.5% of the rims at Fairport Harbor, 14.8% at Lyman. Guthe (1958: 42) illustrates an Ontario Horizontal sherd much like Reeve Horizontal from the Burning Springs site in western New York, but no such sherds are known from western Pennsylvania. The type is very rare at South Park and may prove to be limited largely to the northeastern lake shore.

Relationship: This type is closely related to Reeve Filleted which is merely a variety of Reeve Horizontal characterized by an added rim strip. Further afield, Reeve Horizontal closely resembles Ontario Horizontal (MacNeish 1952: 16; Wright 1966: 61.) White (1961) reports the prevalence of horizontally incised sherds in her "Early Period." On this basis Reeve Horizontal is believed to date around 1300-1400 A.D., the northeastern Ohio equivalent of Wright's Middleport Horizon (Wright 1960: 115.)

Reeve Filleted (Fig. 1, Row 1, center and right)

Description: Identical with Reeve Horizontal except for a notched, added rim strip. This applied strip is easily detached from the rim, and isolated pieces of such applique are common. Unlike Reeve Horizontal, this type rarely has a notched lip. Horizontal incising may be bordered with punctates below the lines. Sherds without horizontal incising but with typical profile (low applied rim strip) are included in Reeve Filleted.

Temper: Shell is slightly more common than in Reeve Horizontal sherds--5.1% at the Reeve site, 51.4% at Fairport Harbor.

Occurrence: A minority type at Reeve (8.8%) and Fairport Harbor (8.1%).

Relationship: A variety of Reeve Horizontal, probably coextensive with that type. Greeman (1939: pl. 2) illustrates a sherd referred to here as Reeve Filleted. Fitting (1965: 146) mentions a sherd intrusive in the

Fort Wayne mound which may be this type or possibly Fairport Filleted. The weakly-developed rim strip distinguishes it from typical Tuttle Hill Notched.

Fairport Filleted (Fig. 2, Row 3)

Description: Rim sherds with a thickened (folded over) lip reminiscent of an added rim strip and presumed to be an antecedent of Reeve Filleted and Tuttle Hill Notched. In contrast with Reeve Filleted, the "rim strip," because of the method of manufacture, never occurs far below the lip and is not detachable. Lips can be flattened, rounded on some specimens, or notched by cordwrapped or plain stick impressions. Rim thickness ranges from 11.3 to 13.9 mm. Below the rim, thickness varies from 5.0 to 8.5 mm.

Temper: Shell tempering occurs in 44% of the sherds available from Fairport Harbor.

Occurrence: Named for the Fairport Harbor site where it forms 16.4% of the rim sherd collection. Rare at Reeve (2.2%) and Lyman (4.9%).

Relationship: Fairport Filleted is closely related to Tuttle Hill Notched and Reeve Filleted. The former is certainly a later type, distinguished by a greater frequency of lip notching and a pronounced collar occurring frequently on simple-stamped or smooth vessels. Reeve Filleted usually occurs on horizontally incised rims with a poorly applied rim strip which is easily detached. Fairport Filleted is also closely related to the "plain" ware common at the Fairport Harbor site, where sherds intermediate between the two types occur.

Tuttle Hill Notched (Fig. 1, Row 3)

Description: Characterized by thick rim strip producing a narrow collar that is invariably notched on the lower edge. The lip is incised or stick impressed, often only above strap handles, on castellations, or at four equidistant points along the lip periphery. The lower part of the rim is often decorated with widely-spaced vertical finger impressions 8-10 cm. long. The body is most frequently simple stamped, but also smoothed or cordmarked.

Temper: Predominantly grit, shell occurring in 23.5% of the rims from South Park.

Occurrence: Common only at South Park (42.9%) and Tuttle Hill (83% according to Fitting [1964: 162]); rare at Reeve (1.8%),

and absent at Fairport Harbor and Lyman.

Relationship: The closest relationships are the sherd samples from the Riker site, Tuscarawas County, dated at 1480 A. D. Individual sherds from Riker would be lost in the South Park Collection. The Ohio River Valley type Vellsburg Simple Stamped (Mayor-Oakes 1955: 203) is also very similar but appears to have an added rim strip rather than a distinct collar. Considerable variation is shown within the South Park sample, however, and subdivision of this type may prove necessary.

Ties with Fort Ancient are apparent, notably in the occurrence of strap handles but also in the presence of simple stamping. Griffin (1943: pl. 70) illustrates several Madisonville vessels which bear a striking resemblance to Tuttle Hill Notched rim sherds.

Radiocarbon dates from the South Park site (J. B. Griffin, personal communication) indicate a very late temporal position for Tuttle Hill Notched: M-2270, 1750 A. D. \pm 100; M-2271, 1650 A.D. \pm 100.

Fairport "Plain" (Fig. 2, Rows 1 and 2)

Description: Cordmarked (82.6%) or smoothed sherds without ornamentation other than a row of punctate markings at the base of the rim. Lip notching or incising is confined to the outer edge of the lip. Rather wide (1¼ inch) stick impressions occur on 88.1% of the sherds; narrow incising, punctate stick impressions, or an unaltered lip characterize the remainder. Four low angular castellations are common, and small strap handles occur. The term "plain" describing this category was originally used by Fitting (1964: 164).

Temper: At Fairport Harbor only 13.7% of these rims are shell tempered. Of those with notched lips, 12.7% contain shell, and 28.6% of the unnotched rims are shell tempered; a chi square test indicates that this difference is not significant at the 5% level. At the Reeve site, 23.5% of the notched sherds and 22.9% of the unnotched sherds have shell tempering.

Occurrence: The most common type at Fairport Harbor (47.9%), less common at Reeve (22.3%).

Relationship: The bulk of the rim sherds assigned to this type seem most closely related to Chautauqua Cord-Marked (Guthe 1958: 56-57) from southwestern New York

and Monongahela Cordmarked (Mayer-Oakes 1955: 196-198) from northwestern Pennsylvania. I have considered these plain rims to be somewhat earlier than Reeve Horizontal and Reeve Filleted by analogy with ceramics described from western New York (White 1961), but may be incorrect. The plain ware does seem to grade into typical Fairport Filleted, presumed to be an antecedent of Reeve Filleted and Tuttle Hill Notched.

The diminutive strap handles and angular castellations distinguish Fairport "Plain" from Fort Ancient utility ware. Lip incising in Fort Ancient types is rarely confined to the outside edge of the lip, a trait highly characteristic of Fairport "Plain."

McFate Incised (Reeve Opposed) (Fig. 1, Row 2, right; Fig. 2, Row 4, center)

Description: Multiple opposed diagonal incising on cord-marked or smoothed rims. Low angular castellations are present.

Temper: Generally shell (58% at Lyman), but also crushed igneous rock.

Occurrence: The dominant form at Lyman (38.3%), rare at Fairport Harbor (0.7%) and Reeve (4.9%).

Relationship: Fitting (1964: 164) proposed the name Reeve Opposed for sherds with this simple incised motif, but there seems to be no significant difference between material from the Reeve and Lyman sites and McFate Incised sherds from Monongahela sites in western Pennsylvania. Dragoo (1955: 105) emphasized the occurrence of incising over cordmarking in McFate Incised but there seems to be complete gradation between such sherds and completely smoothed rims. Similar variation is shown among the Reeve Horizontal rims.

A variety of incised motifs common on shell-tempered sherds at the Lyman site are probably related to McFate Incised but the material was too fragmentary for thorough analysis and is not included in the percentage of McFate Incised from that site.

Except for the basic similarity of the opposed incised motif, there is no resemblance between this type and Feurt Phase Fort Ancient ceramics.

Parker Festooned (Fig. 1, Row 2, left)

Description: Sherds with rim ornament of multiple incised, dragged, or appliqued

festoons. Notches or a row of punctates may occur at the lip and base of the rim. Appliqued strips no more than ¼ inch wide may be notched or incised.

Occurrence: Lee (1958: 11) described this type from the Parker earthworks, Corunna, Ontario. He noted the occurrence of similar sherds in the Whittlesey Focus of Ohio, the Wolf site in Michigan, and the Lawson site in Ontario. Sherds considered to be Parker Festooned are very rare at South Park, Tuttle Hill, Reeve, and the Carey Farm site. It is abundant at Verchave 1 in Michigan, associated with a radiocarbon date of 1320 A. D. (Fitting 1966). Shane (1967: Pls. 2B, 3, and 4a) illustrates sherds from the Mixer site, Erie County, Ohio.

Remarks: Lee included in Parker Festooned sherds both with and without the narrow bands of applique, though the presence or absence of these bands may prove significant. None of the sherds known from Ohio have such applique. An unfortunate confusion exists on this point, for Lee has misinterpreted Greenman's description of rims from Tuttle Hill and South Park. Greenman (1937: 347) in speaking of added strips means the added strip of Tuttle Hill Notched or Reeve Filleted, not the narrow festooned applique of Parker Festooned, which is lacking on those Parker Festooned sherds known from northeastern Ohio.

Relationship: Greenman long ago noted the similarity of Whittlesey sherds from Ohio to Parker Festooned (then unnamed) from the Wolf Site in Michigan, but the significance of its rare though nearly ubiquitous occurrence in Ohio Whittlesey is difficult to evaluate. The few sherds from the Reeve site are definitely more crudely executed than sherds from sites further west. The same is true of the McFate Incised sherds if they are compared to sherds from the Lyman site or from Pennsylvania. This may indicate the adoption of foreign motifs at Reeve by a group peripheral to the Monongahela Complex on one side and to the Michigan "Whittlesey Focus" on the other.

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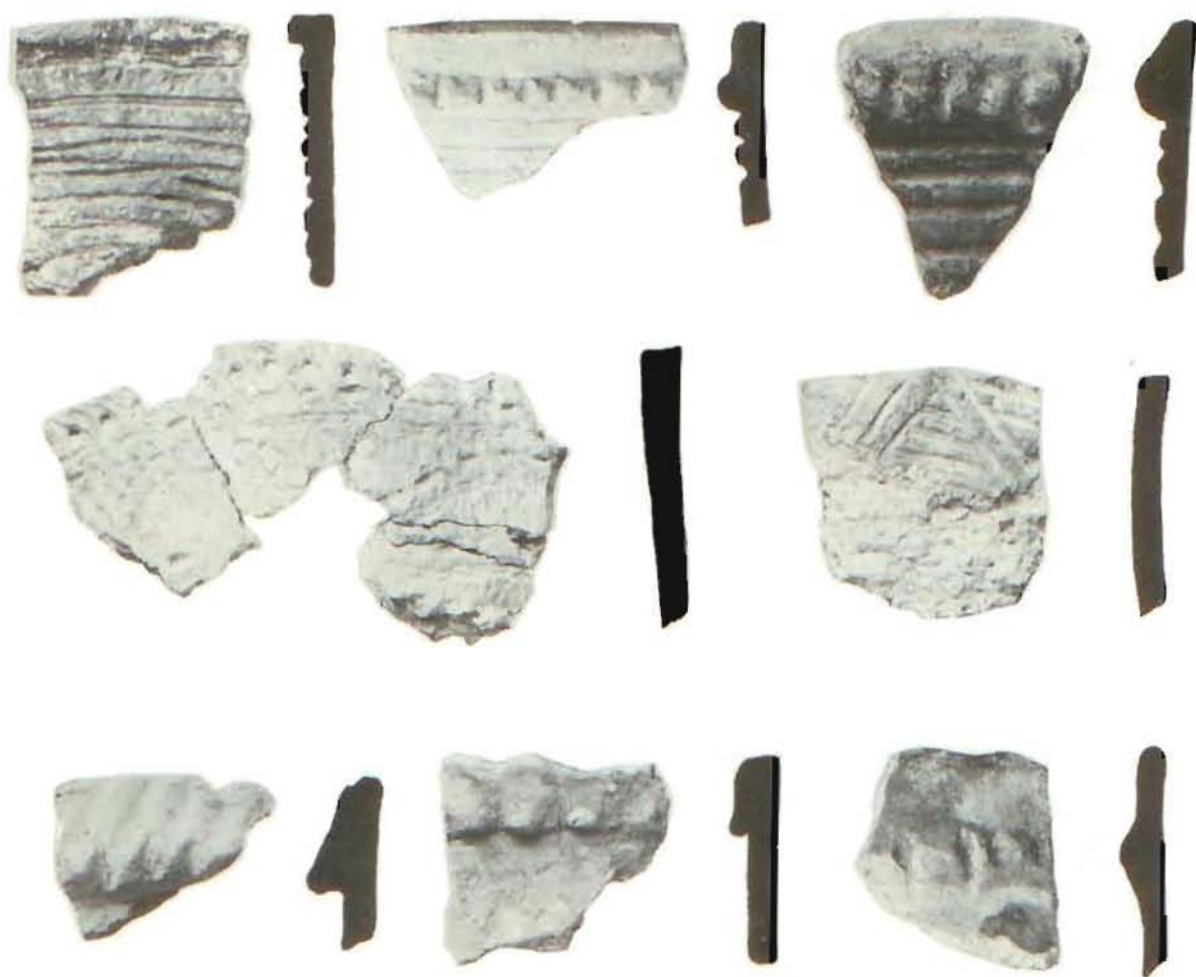


Figure 1 (Murphy). Row 1: Reeve Horizontal and two sherds of Reeve Filleted. Row 2: Crudely executed sherds of Parker Festooned and McFate Incised. Row 3: Tuttle Hill Notched. All sherds approximately XO. 6. All sherds from the Reeve site, except two in lower left which are from the South Park site.



Figure 2 (Murphy). Rows 1 and 2: Varieties of Fairport "Plain". Row 3: Fairport Filleted. Row 4: Two strap handles probably belong to Fairport "Plain" vessels; McFate Incised; Reeve Horizontal. All sherds approximately XO. 6. All sherds from the Fairport Harbor site.